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Obituary Notices.

Truman Henry Safford, for many years Professor of Astronomy at Williams College, died at Newark, June 12th. From a short account of his life, published in *Science*, July 5th, by Professor Harold Jacoby, the following extracts are taken: —

"Born January 6, 1836, at Royalton, Vt., he showed already in his early boyhood the extraordinary arithmetical powers which distinguished him through life; for he could at all times multiply mentally very large numbers, knew off-hand the multiplication-table to 1,000, and most of the logarithmic tables to three figures. At fourteen he is said to have calculated a cometary orbit, and he graduated from Harvard at eighteen. For some years he was observer at that University under Bond, and for a short time was acting director. In 1865 he took charge of the Chicago Observatory, where he began his serious work, the observation of one of the Astronomische Gesellschaft zones. But his work was cut short and his position lost through the great Chicago fire. He then entered Wheeler's astronomical survey in the far West, and worked during several years for the Government scientific bureaus of Washington. It was not until 1876 that he finally settled down for life as Professor of Astronomy in Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.

"Here was done his principal work, which related especially to star-positions and star-catalogues. He made an elaborate discussion of all existing observations of the stars most suitable for determining geographical latitudes of the United States. This resulted in a catalogue of 2,018 stars, which was published by the Engineer's Department, U. S. Army. Later, he made a similar catalogue of 612 stars, and upon it has been based the new boundary between the United States and Mexico. This was published in the report of the Mexican Boundary Commission, Washington, 1898. Safford built at Williamstown a meridian observatory, which is a model of its class. In it he installed a Repsold circle, with which he made extensive observations of the close polar stars. He liked these stars especially, and the unusually lengthy numerical calculations connected with them did not frighten him. He needed no observing list, as his memory never failed to give him the instrumental setting for each of his beloved polars in every possible position of his instrument. These polar observations were collected and published by him in the "Williams College Catalogue of North Polar Stars." . . .

"More striking, perhaps, was his confident prediction, in 1861, of the minute unseen companion of the bright star *Sirius*. Basing laborious calculations on the tiny irregularities in existing observations, he was able to show just where the little *comes* must be. And there it was found in January, 1862, by Alvan Clark, of Cambridgeport, Mass., while he was testing the 18-inch glass mounted at Evanston, Ill.

"Safford was a frequent contributor to astronomical and educational publications, and a member of many learned bodies. The Royal Astronomical Society of London honored him with an election as associate, in 1866, when he was but thirty years of age. Great as were his abilities in astronomy, he was yet at his best as a teacher. Those who came under his influence at Williamstown can bear witness to this; his ablest pupils profited most from his stored learning, and some from among them are laboring for astronomy to-day."

GEORGE K. LAWTON.—In the unexpected death of GEORGE K. LAWTON, of the U. S. Naval Observatory, a young astronomer of great promise has passed away. The loss to American astronomy can be appreciated as yet only by those who had the good fortune to know him intimately. He was born October 20, 1873, and died at Washington, July 25, 1901, after a brief illness of twelve days, of typhoid fever; and was thus less than twenty-eight years of age. Under the guidance of his father, Professor U. W. LAWTON, of Jackson, Michigan, he had enjoyed from childhood excellent educational advantages, and in 1895 graduated in classics at the University of Michigan, where he also pursued advanced astronomical studies under Professor ASAPH HALL, Jr., at the Detroit Observatory. He then spent a year in postgraduate study at the University of Chicago, where the writer had the honor to be one of his teachers. He showed distinguished abilities in the study of celestial mechanics and of higher mathematics. He was afterwards attached to the Observatory of Yale University for a short time, occupied mainly with work on meteors; and then came to the Naval Observatory as one of the regular computers. In 1897 he took the degree of M. A. at the University of Michigan.

While attached to this observatory he participated in all the transit-circle observations of the past five years, much of which has recently appeared in the *Publications of the U. S. Naval Observatory* (Vol. I, New Series). Last year he bore an important part in the observations of the total eclipse of the Sun, at Pinehurst, North Carolina. More recently he took the leading part in the reductions and revision of the *Eros* observations of this observatory, and has been occupied partly with equatorial work. Only a month ago he was permanently assigned to the 26-inch equatorial, and had entered upon researches of great promise.

On account of his extreme modesty, and the arrearages of our publications, his scientific reputation at the time of his death was in no way commensurate with his merits. Yet he was already a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and last year participated in the meeting of the Astronomical and Astrophysical Society of America.